

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Claims 1-26 canceled.

27. (new) A method for vacuum-packaging a single disposable diaper to yield a single individually packaged disposable diaper that is compact and portable, comprising the steps of:
- (a) compressing the disposable diaper from a first condition to a second, compressed condition such that each of at least two dimensions of the disposable diaper is reduced, and such that at least one of the reduced dimensions is reduced by at least 30%, said step of compressing being performed without folding of the disposable diaper and without rolling of the disposable diaper; and
 - (b) retaining the disposable diaper in the second, compressed condition by,
 - (i) locating the diaper in an interior space defined by a substantially flexible material,
 - (ii) creating a negative pressure within the interior space, and
 - (iii) hermetically sealing the diaper at the negative pressure within the interior space of the flexible material such that a pressure differential acts upon the flexible material to maintain the diaper in the compressed condition;
 - (c) wherein the disposable diaper is the only diaper located within the interior space of the flexible material.

28. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein the flexible material comprises a thermoplastic shrink-wrap material.
29. (new) The method of claim 27, further comprising, prior to said step (a) of compressing the disposable diaper, reconfiguring the diaper.
30. (new) The method of claim 29, wherein said step of reconfiguring the disposable diaper includes folding the diaper.
31. (new) The method of claim 30, wherein said step of folding includes forming three widthwise folds in the disposable diaper.
32. (new) The method of claim 31, wherein said three widthwise folds are about evenly spaced along a length of the diaper between opposed ends of the diaper.
33. (new) The method of claim 29, wherein said step of reconfiguring the disposable diaper includes rolling the diaper such that the disposable diaper is cylindrical in shape.
34. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein said step (a) of compressing the disposable diaper includes reducing each of height, width, and length dimensions of the disposable diaper.
35. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein said step (a) of compressing the disposable diaper includes reducing each of width, thickness, and diameter dimensions of the disposable diaper.
36. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein said step (a) of compressing the disposable diaper includes compressing the diaper such that a volume of the diaper is reduced by at least 30%.

37. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein said step (a) of compressing the disposable diaper includes compressing the diaper such that a volume of the diaper is reduced by at least 50%.
38. (new) A method for vacuum-packaging a single disposable diaper to yield a single individually packaged disposable diaper that is compact and portable, comprising the steps of:
- (a) compressing the disposable diaper from a first condition to a second, compressed condition such that each of at least two dimensions of the disposable diaper is reduced, and such that a volume of the disposable diaper is reduced by at least 30%, said step of compressing being performed without folding of the disposable diaper and without rolling of the disposable diaper; and
 - (b) retaining the disposable diaper in the second, compressed condition by,
 - (i) locating the diaper in an interior space defined by a substantially flexible material,
 - (ii) creating a negative pressure within the interior space, and
 - (iii) hermetically sealing the diaper at the negative pressure within the interior space of the flexible material such that a pressure differential acts upon the flexible material to maintain the diaper in the compressed condition;
 - (c) wherein the disposable diaper is the only diaper located within the interior space of the flexible material.

39. The method of claim 38, wherein said step (a) of compressing the disposable diaper includes compressing the diaper such that a volume of the diaper is reduced by at least 50%.
40. The method of claim 38, wherein said step (a) of compressing the disposable diaper includes compressing the diaper such that at least one of the reduced dimensions is reduced by at least 30%.
41. (new) The method of claim 38, wherein the flexible material comprises a thermoplastic shrink-wrap material.
42. (new) A method for vacuum-packaging a single disposable diaper to yield a single individually packaged disposable diaper that is compact and portable, comprising the steps of:
 - (a) first, folding the disposable diaper;
 - (b) after said folding step, compressing the disposable diaper from a first condition to a second, compressed condition such that each of three dimensions of the disposable diaper is reduced, and such that at least one of the reduced dimensions is reduced by at least 30%, said step of compressing being performed without folding of the disposable diaper and without rolling of the disposable diaper; and
 - (c) retaining the disposable diaper in the second, compressed condition by,
 - (i) locating the diaper in an interior space defined by a substantially flexible material,
 - (ii) creating a negative pressure within the interior space, and

- (iii) hermetically sealing the diaper at the negative pressure within the interior space of the flexible material such that a pressure differential acts upon the flexible material to maintain the diaper in the compressed condition;
 - (d) wherein the disposable diaper is the only diaper located within the interior space of the flexible material.
- 43. The method of claim 42, wherein said step (a) of compressing the disposable diaper includes compressing the diaper such that a volume of the diaper is reduced by at least 50%.
- 44. (new) The method of claim 42, wherein said step (a) of folding includes forming three widthwise folds in the disposable diaper.
- 45. (new) The method of claim 44, wherein the three widthwise folds are about evenly spaced along a length of the diaper between opposed ends of the diaper.
- 46. (new) The method of claim 42, wherein the flexible material comprises a thermoplastic shrink-wrap material.